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# NEWS RELEASE

Release Number: 48

Release Date: August 31, 2007

## Judicial Council Approves Continuing Education Program for Appellate Courts

### *Other actions taken on court funding, interpreters*

San Francisco—At a public meeting today, the Judicial Council of California approved minimum education requirements for justices, clerks/administrators, managing attorneys, supervisors, and staff of the California Supreme Court and the state Courts of Appeal.

In a related action, the 29-member council approved similar minimum education requirements for management staff and other employees of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

This is the first time that comprehensive education requirements have been adopted for the state appellate courts and the AOC, and follow last year's adoption of education rules for the state trial courts.

"The rules adopted today underscore the importance of continuing education programs to help ensure the professional excellence of our judiciary," said Chief Justice Ronald M. George. "The Administrative Presiding Justices of the Courts of Appeal are to be commended for their proposal to make the minimum education requirements mandatory in their courts. The Supreme Court agreed to adopt similar requirements. All state appellate courts, as well as the AOC, will benefit from the new program, as will the public at large."

The rules adopted today include continuing education for the justices as a requirement, unlike the rules adopted last year for trial court judges, which made their continuing education an "expectation."

The council adopted today's proposal with one amendment: the minimum continuing education requirement for appellate judicial attorneys was raised from 8 hours in a two-year period to 12 hours in a two-year period, the same number of hours as for appellate managing attorneys.

(more)

Effective January 1, 2008, the new requirements are part of a comprehensive continuing education program developed by the AOC's Education Division/Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER), one of the leading educational organizations of its kind in the nation. The proposals were recommended by CJER's Governing Committee, an advisory committee to the Judicial Council.

## **OTHER ACTIONS**

In other action, the Judicial Council:

**Budget Allocations for Trial Courts:** Approved the allocation of \$74.744 million in fiscal year 2007-2008 funding to cover trial court operating expenses, staff compensation, and other costs. The trial courts' allocation also includes \$12.373 million for the most under-resourced courts as identified by the AOC's Resource Allocation Study. In addition, \$35.4 million from State 0.Appropriation Limit security funding and one-time carryover funds was approved to address projected security cost increases.

**Budget Proposals for Appellate Courts:** Approved the development of budget proposals for fiscal year 2008-2009 for the Supreme Court, the Courts of Appeal, the Judicial Council, and the California Judicial Center Library. The proposals will identify resource needs associated with increased costs and workload to provide services to the courts and the public, as well as for internal infrastructure needs to support judicial branch operations.

**Civil Assessments:** Approved policy recommendations related to the revenue distribution of civil assessments imposed by the trial courts and the standardization of aspects of civil assessment programs statewide. The council also approved an allocation plan to address a growing revenue shortfall by apportioning the reduced revenues to trial courts based on their share of the beginning statewide base budget each fiscal year.

**Court Interpreters:** Revised the *Payment Policies for Contract Court Interpreters* which include daily compensation rates, the definition of half-day and full-day sessions, compensation for after-hours proceedings, and mileage reimbursement requirements. Effective September 1, 2007, the compensation rates for contract court interpreters in all four regions of the state will be \$282.23 per full-day or \$156.56 per half-day. The current rate is \$265 per day or \$147 per half day.

**Jury Instructions:** The council approved the publication of revisions and additions to the California Civil Jury Instructions, which were first published in 2003 and last revised in April 2007. The proposal includes revisions to six punitive damages instructions, revisions

to two Fair Employment and Housing Act instructions, and a new series of instructions on unlawful detainer.

**Foster Children:** Accepted an interim report by California Supreme Court Justice Carlos R. Moreno on the Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care, which he chairs. Justice Moreno described the commission's major goals and plans for the coming year. The commission will present its final report and recommendations in 2008.

The Judicial Council meeting is audiocast on the California Courts Web site at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/). The agenda and reports are available at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/age083107.pdf](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/age083107.pdf).

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